

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, applicants request acknowledgement of the references cited in an Information Disclosure Statement on May 22, 2001. Consideration of the references cited in another IDS on May 19, 2004 is also requested. Copies of the PTO-1449 forms are enclosed.

The abstract has been amended as requested.

Claims 1-23 stand rejected under § 102 (e) on the basis of Berry et al. '471. Applicant traverses this rejection because Berry is not prior art under § 102(e). Berry's earliest U.S. filing date is June 29, 2000, and applicant's foreign priority date is June 13, 2000. For this reason, Berry is not prior art to the present invention. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant believes that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicant's attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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